

Strategies to support the COVID-19 response in LMICs

A virtual seminar series

Resource Page

Non-Communicable Disease Management in Low Resource Settings during the Pandemic

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Summary/Key Points:

- Where we are now
 - In the Americas, 81% of all deaths are due to NCDs
 - Even prior to COVID-19, NCDs pose major challenges to healthcare systems with inadequate coordination between public and private systems and hospital-centric systems
 - The epicenter of the pandemic is shifting to the Americas
 - NCDs such as hypertension, diabetes, cancer, chronic kidney disease, and chronic respiratory diseases lead to a higher risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19
- COVID-19 poses many challenges to NCD management, screening, and data collection
 - Stay at home orders leading to increased NCD risks: poor diets, less physical activity, increased smoking and drinking alcohol
 - Disruption in provision of healthcare services including closures
 - Fear of attending care facilities leading to reduced elective clinic visits and delays in high priority treatments for patients with NCDs
 - NCD staff have frequently been partially or fully reassigned to the COVID-19 response
 - Public screening programs for NCDs have been postponed
 - NCD data collection including surveys has been postponed in many countries
- What is needed
 - Prevention and management of NCDs must be part of national responses to COVID-19
 - Timely access to healthcare and essential medicines for NCDs

- Provide increased medication supplies (ex: 3 mo refills instead of 1 mo)
 - Medication delivery
 - Telemedicine, virtual consultations, and other strategies when possible
- Maintain and strengthen policies to control risk factors (ex: tobacco control policies)
- Surveillance systems must include data collection on NCDs and NCD-related comorbidities in COVID-19 patients
- PAHO's Response
 - Monitoring effects of COVID-19 on NCDs and Mental Health
 - Technical guidance and webinars on maintaining NCD services during the pandemic
 - Support policies to reduce smoking, alcohol, and unhealthy diets
 - Communication materials and social medial messages to raise awareness among people living with NCDs, health workers, and the public

Online resources:

PAHO: NCDs and Covid19 Resources [In English](#) – [En Español](#)

PAHO: Mental Health and Covid19 Resources [In English](#) – [En Español](#)

PAHO: Virtual Course on Fundamentals of Palliative Care (5 hrs) [In English](#)